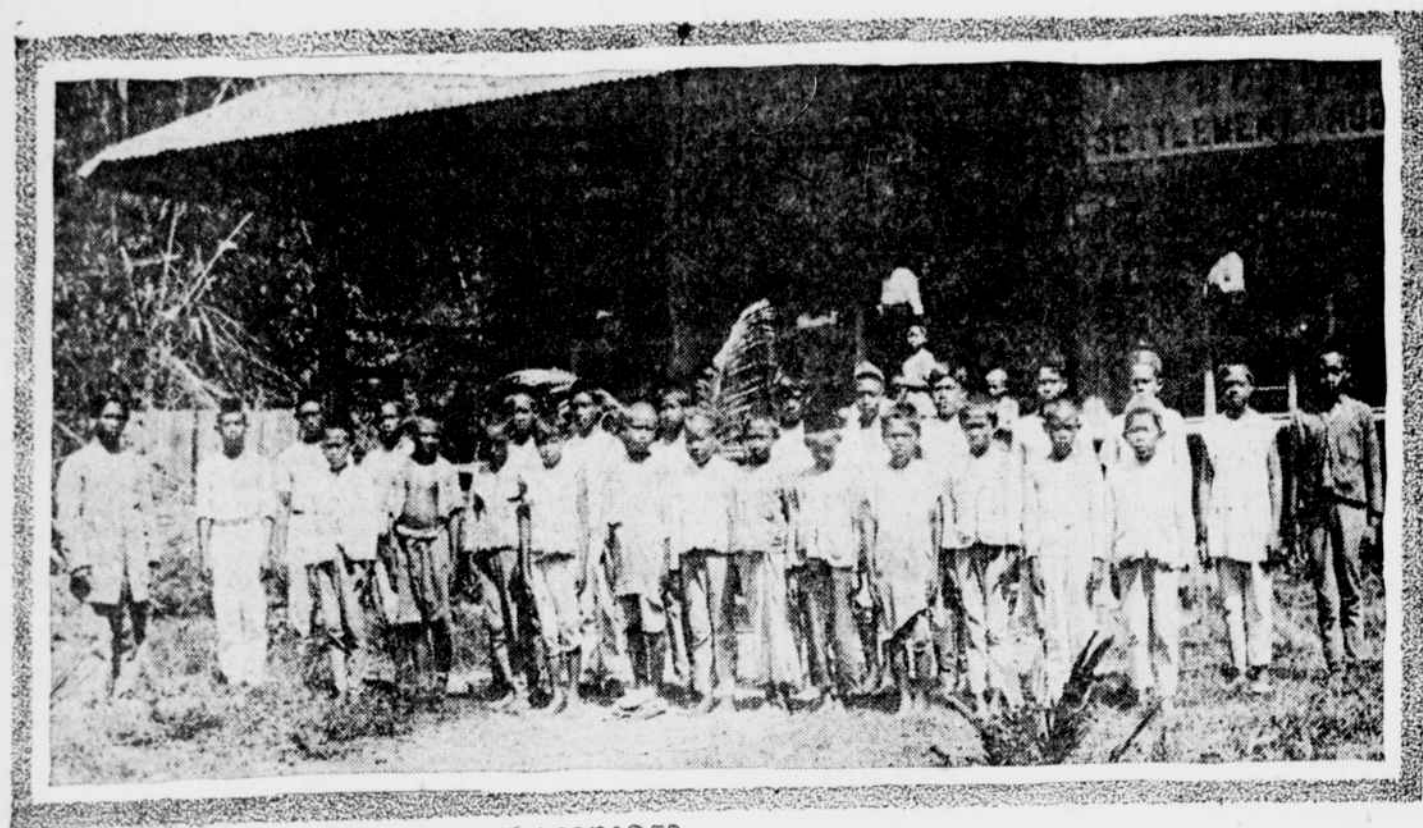


# KISER'S STURDY BROWN BOY SCOUTS OF MOROLAND



AS THE BOYS FIRST APPEARED.



ONE WEEK LATER, TAKING THE OATH AND BECOMING FULL FLEDGED MORO BOY SCOUTS.

## Group of Bare, Dusky Lads Developed Into Band of Martial Youths.

By HERBERT FRANCIS SHERWOOD.

EARLY last fall three persons sat in a room over the ill-smelling Pearl Exchange, in Jolo, capital of the Sulu Archipelago, looking at an album of pictures of New York Boy Scouts. They were Mrs. Lorillard Spencer, sr., of Newport; Miss Katherine Buffum, of New York, and Lieutenant Sherman Kiser, of the Philippine Scouts. As they turned the pages of the book, which Mrs. Spencer had brought from the United States, they forgot the odors from the Pearl Exchange below in their interest in the pictures from the far away home land.

"Do you know," Lieutenant Kiser said suddenly, "I think I would like to start a Moro Boy Scout patrol."

He had been ordered to Zamboanga, the home of Governor Carter, a Moro town, sheltered by the coconut groves of Southwestern Mindanao, and was to leave within three days. In Moroland there is a proverb that nothing can be kept secret—if one knows it, everybody knows it. It is remarkable how news travels through the islands by word of mouth and in the most mysterious fashion, as if it used the winds of the heavens as a chariot. So when Lieutenant Kiser had settled down at Zamboanga, he mentioned his idea. That was enough.

At the appointed time he was greeted by a crowd of youngsters, so large that when lined up across the Americanized street they stood three rows deep. Not only had the boys come, but their sisters had accompanied them. An American of the kind to whom a joke is the great thing in life would have roared at the spectacle presented by the "little brown brothers." Some wore nothing. Nearly all were bareheaded. All were barefooted. Some were dressed in garments once white. The

and more fully clothed youths. A group of interested spectators looked on from the veranda.

For the "little brown brothers" this was a serious moment. As they were told off they formed a fresh line-up, a new sense of dignity taking possession of them and expressing itself in their countenances. Some plastered rigid hands to their thighs, after the military custom. Perhaps they saw themselves as



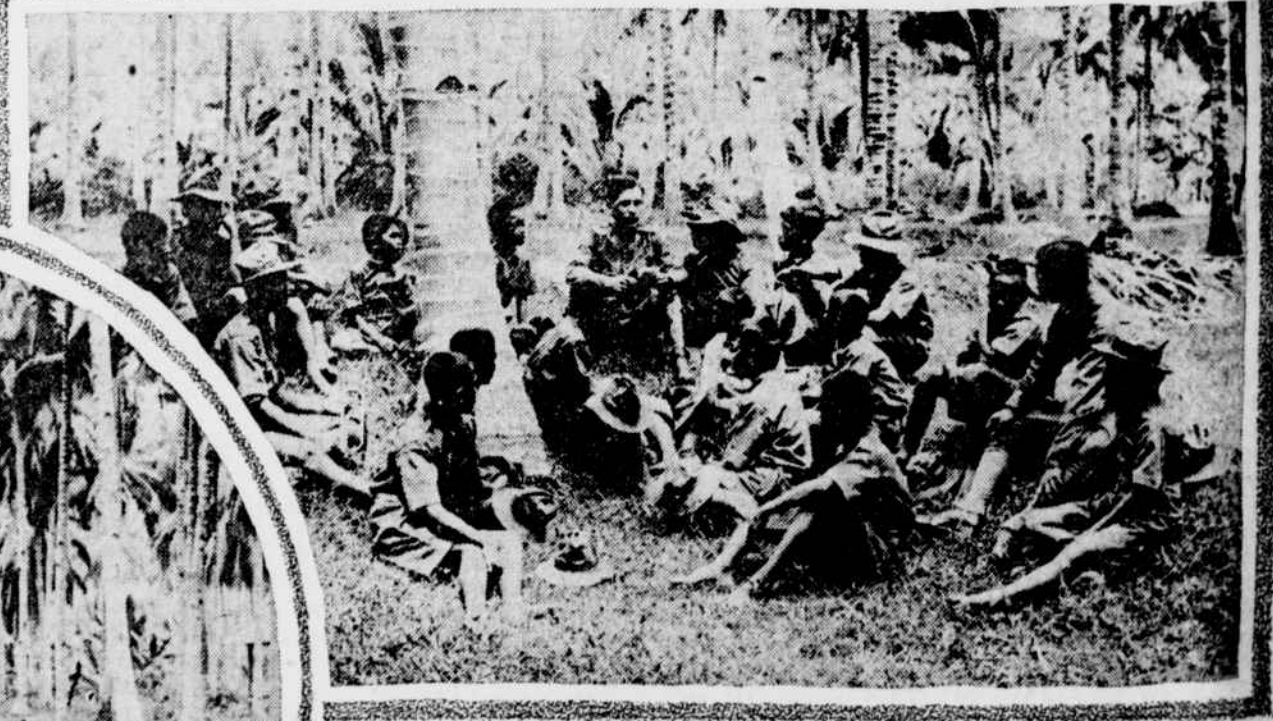
TEACHING KINDNESS TO DUMB ANIMALS



CLEANING UP THEIR VILLAGE



SIGNAL DRILL



READING THE SCOUT LAWS

trousers, knee length, were rolled up at various altitudes on the thighs. Others wore what looked like remnants of cheap striped bathing suits. One roguish youngster, by clapping his hands on the top of his head, accentuated the abbreviated character of his garb. It consisted of an unrecognizable garment of striped material, passed around his neck and flowed down the back to his waist, around which it finished its career in the form of a belt. There was no clothing below his waist line.

Little could be done with such a throng. So the enthusiastic scout officer invited the most promising to attend him to the Moro Settlement House. This was a one story structure, with a rustic railing around its broad veranda, standing in the shade of a coconut grove. It had been built by Bishop Brent. The house mother was Miss Helen Howard, a daughter of General Howard, of the United States Army, who died in the Philippines. She had made it a centre of Moro life. Here the boys, not unacquainted with the place, lined up again. With them were a few somewhat older

members of the Philippine Scouts in the dim and distant files of time.

They were ready for Boy Scout uniforms now. These were made of khaki, but, owing to the climate, of a lighter weight than that used in the United States. To each of the dark skinned lads was given a shirt with elbow length sleeves, trousers of knee length and campaign hats. Then they took a hike and seated on a slope under a grove of coconut palms, they heard from the lips of Lieutenant Kiser an explanation of the aims of Boy Scouts and the scout laws. Satisfied with what they had heard, they rose and took their places in a semi-circle around the officer of the Philippine Scouts. Erect, shoulder to shoulder, hat hanging in the left hand, every eye fixed upon the white man in the centre, they raised their right hands as in salute. With three fingers extended upward, every face and figure expressing a realization of the significance of the act, they took the oath of allegiance required of all Boy Scouts. This included, of course, an oath of allegiance to the United States flag.

The troop was divided into three patrols of eight boys each. They looked like a military company when they lined up, the bugler, with the mouth of his shining instrument resting on his hip, standing at the right end of the line.

It is one thing to organize a company of

boys of such antecedents as these lads into a homogeneous group. It is another to make them into real scouts. That is, it seems so on first thought. When we remember that boys are very much alike in every part of the world, whether they be Moro, Kafir or English, then we should expect the members of

this new troop to demonstrate their capacity to assimilate the principles which the Boy Scout movement has shown to be a vital part of boy nature. They proved that they could respond just as boys in other parts of the world have done.

"The boys are so interested," Lieutenant Kiser wrote less than two months after organizing the troop, "and work so hard, they have done more already than I had planned for six months. They seem to understand everything by only one explanation. I have a time getting away from them. They follow me around and watch me as if I were something wonderful. I have to be so careful of my acts in their presence because they seem to think I am perfect. I gave them a set of boxing gloves a few days ago, and I wish you could see them box. They are as light as cats and certainly clever. They have had a couple

himself a passenger on some sacred carpet on his way to paradise, when food was offered him by his former enemies. In his astonishment, he looked at the ground with no show of realizing what was being proffered him.

The clean-up campaign was a piece of fine civic service, as any one who has seen a Moro village will realize. Lieutenant Kiser showed them how to get at the beetles in coconut palms and plug up the holes in the tree's protective covering, so that no other insects could successfully conduct an invasion.

To have organized a successful Boy Scout troop in a little Moro village seems on its face not a great thing to do. It is not until one considers the significance of it that it looms large. Here is what Lieutenant Kiser thinks of the results of his afternoon with the album of photographs of New York Boy Scouts.

"I do think," he said, "that if the Boy Scouts could have plenty of good masters here in the Philippines it would do more toward the civilization of these peoples than anything else I know of, because so much more can be done with the boy's mind. Get him at an early age, when his character is forming, and mould it in the right way. I have noticed with my Boy Scouts that I can get them to do anything without the least trouble. They are more keen about the things that are instructive and worth while than they are about the worthless. They seem eager for knowledge."

Mrs. Spencer, who has just returned from the Moros and who brought the pictures accompanying this article, adds this:

"While the greater part of the civilized world is bent on destruction, it is a pleasant thought to those who realize it that we as a nation are accomplishing a bit of constructive work, the like of which for picturesque interest has seldom been equalled. On the other side of the globe there is a group of islands known as the Sulu Archipelago, where a brave but backward race are holding out their hands for help. Some say they are not worthy and exterminate the only hope for peace, but I think these pictures of the first patrol of Boy Scouts ever started among Moros will witness to the fact that the rising generation, properly guided, is not far behind their white brothers, whose advantages have been so much greater."

of lessons about tree-destroying bugs and worms. Besides, they are daily putting the Boy Scout laws into action. I also bought some large baskets, brooms, garden rakes and grass cutters, and the boys are attempting to clean up their village. By bringing them up to the post and showing them our clean roads and houses, they have been helped a lot. I am going to have them make me a special call at my house to-morrow afternoon and treat them as if they were well bred gentlemen."

The boys, as the letter shows, proved themselves related to their fellows everywhere. The new spirit exhibited itself in many ways. There was a dog with an injured leg. Having been taught first aid to the injured, they applied their knowledge. This was an incident almost revolutionary in its nature. Moro boys have never been known to look upon dumb animals as subjects for kindness. Half starved and suffering dogs such as this one were accustomed to a "tin can" kind of life. The dog, bony and woe begone, for an instant thought

"This constructive work of Lieutenant Kiser's covers less than two months. If it has accomplished nothing else it has quite changed the attitude of the white population of Zamboanga, who cannot now do enough for the nice, clean little scouts, to whom a few weeks ago they would not have paid the slightest attention. One army doctor was so impressed he presented each boy with a first aid kit, and the commanding officer of Zamboanga is loud in their praise."

One day, previous to the conversion of the whites to this new attitude toward the native children, Major C—— was walking along the village street. He was surprised at receiving a salute from a small boy in khaki uniform. He turned to speak to the lad, who was standing straight as an arrow, at the edge of the road.

"Who are you?" asked the major.

"I am a Moro Boy Scout, and Lieutenant Kiser is my master."

The new respect for the Moros dated from that moment.